commentaries on her writing. Noted also are books and articles of related interest: politics and history, censorship, local environment and travel, biography, letters, and autobiography. Also listed are works relating to African and South African history and literature.

The literary influences on Nadine Gordimer are clearly indexed. One is amazed by the range of her reading in the literature of many times and places. However, it is in South Africa that Gordimer has chosen to remain, to write within the system, at close hand to the clash of a country defining and redefining itself. Clingman's subtitle, *History from the Inside,* is an ironic comment on the complexity of Gordimer's orientation as a white South African who, being a woman and a Jew, is a member of further subgroups—inside, and yet outside.

With such historical, ethnic, cultural and sexual perspective has come prophetic wisdom evident throughout Gordimer's writing (see the index entry, "Prophesy"). Each of the novels "ends with a vision, and it might properly be called an historical vision. It is a vision of the future, from the present, for the society and the characters with which it has dealt." May Gordimer's visions contribute to the raising of consciousness of people in all parts of our earth.

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**Jose Luis Colon-Santiago, *La Primera Vez Que Yo Vi El Paraiso.* (New York: Ediciones Moria, 1990) 87 pp., $9.95 cloth.**

Written reminiscences have taken the form of a literary subgenre and are very popular among Puerto Rican writers residing in the United States. This literary form not only is an integral part of a serious body of literature in Puerto Rican letters, but in most cases, constitutes the first step taken by many of our writers. Such is the case of Colon-Santiago's first narrative experiment: *La Primera Vez Que Yo Vi El Paraiso (The First Time I Saw Paradise).*

Two of the best known literary examples of this type of writing are: *Family Installments: Memories of Growing Up Hispanic* by Edward Rivera (reviewed in *Explorations in Sights and Sounds,* Summer 1986, pp. 66-68) and *Down These Mean Streets* by Piri Thomas, probably the archetypical model that established the canon for this sub-genre among Puerto Rican writers.

Unlike Piri Thomas's and Edward Rivera's protagonists, who were born and raised in New York City and whose daily relations and social interactions are with a different society that saw them as racially, linguistically and culturally different, Colon-Santiago's protagonist, Guiso, was born and raised in Puerto Rico. Guiso's language

is Spanish, and he functions like a Puerto Rican who also has to confront the linguistic, cultural and racial prejudices of the dominant culture.

Guiso, the protagonist when the story begins, is a young man, twenty-five years old, the third and younger son of a Pentecostal family, who is coming to New York City for the third time. Now, he is accompanied by his wife, Ana Iris, and his two children. Colon-Santiago uses very effectively the "flashback" technique to tell this moving story. While sitting in the airplane, Guiso remembers all that had happened to him in his previous visits to New York and why he came here in the first place—the same reason why he is coming the third time.

The story line is constantly interrupted as Guiso's mind wanders in the chronological time that it takes to make the flight from San Juan to Kennedy Airport. He reminisces about what has happened in his life during the past thirteen years, especially his drug use. He remembers his mischievous behavior in school and in his hometown of Cidra. That was the reason why he was sent to New York the first time. His parents thought that once in New York he would go to school, would make new and better friends and that his behavioral problems would be resolved.

Fortunately, Guiso has turned his life completely around. He has become a proud member of our Puerto Rican community. He is very active organizing literary workshops, is co-editor of a literary magazine. His poetry has been published in about half a dozen literary publications.

Colon-Santiago's narration, besides being a good example of the reminiscent narrative subgenre, is also important on account of the innovative use that he makes of the language. The author uses, sometimes, very coarse language in narrating some of his most intimate experiences. This book presents a serious challenge for the literary critics if they pretend to analyze it according to the canon established by the academies and the moral and civil precepts that usually are used to judge a written text. What really saves this narration is that, putting aside the strong language, there is a vitality that sustains the story from beginning to end by the vivid and imaginative pictoralizing of a human reality being lived by the author . This reality is lived today by thousands upon thousands of human beings all over the world where the drug addiction subculture is a serious problem.

This narration is sprinkled with a lot of linguistic terms that are only known to sociologists and by the people closely associated with this subculture. Colon-Santiago as narrator-protagonist quite often introduces plays on words taken from the street Spanish spoken

in the different scenarios where the story develops. This appropriate use of the language adds more realism to the story when this version of street-smart language is used.

There is no question that Colon-Santiago makes a unique contribution to the ever-growing body of Puerto Rican literature written by natives of the island or by immediate descendants of Puerto Ricans living in the diaspora.

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**S. Allen Counter. *North Pole Legacy: Black, White and Eskimo.* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1991) 222 pages, $14.95 paper.**

According to the *Guiness Book of Records*, Eskimos Egingwah, Ootah, Ooqueahand Seegloo, along with African American Matthew Henson, became the first humans to stand on the North Pole. The date of their famous journey to "where no one has gone before" was April 6, 1909. However, they were denied the status of "co-discoverer" with Robert E. Perry, who came along about forty-five minutes later. Perry's reward to Henson for reaching the Pole before him was to ignore Henson from that time. The names of the Eskimos were also dropped from history.

Professor Allen S. Counter is a Harvard professor of neuroscience and director of the Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations. He received permission from Denmark in 1986 to travel to Greenland to conduct audiological studies on Eskimos. While there he located the octogenarian Amer-Eskimo sons of Henson and Perry, plus great-grandchildren. While in the Arctic Henson had a son named Anaukag, while Perry had two sons—Kali and his deceased older brother, also named Anaukag. Counter learned that both men wanted to go to America and meet their American relatives before they died. At this point the book documents the amazing stories of history, culture, determination, near-misses, love, embarrassment, denial, family relations and other themes to bring "The North Pole Family Reunion" to Harvard.

The two men were treated entirely differently by their families. When word reached the Henson family, everyone vied to be the host for their Eskimo relatives. In contrast, the Perrys greeted the news through an official spokesman with stony silence and not one Perry family member attended the ceremony held at Admiral Perry's grave at Arlington National Cemetery (though Robert E. Perry, Jr., did greet his half-brother at the Perry home in Augusta, Maine.)